

LYME REGIS BOROUGH COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

FOR THE YEAR 1937.

Medical Officer of Health :

ADAM ARMIT, M.B., CH.B., D.P.H.

Sanitary Inspector & Borough Surveyor :

E. PRESCOTT, A.S.R.I., M.INST.B.E.,
REGISTERED ARCHITECT.

LYME REGIS BOROUGH COUNCIL.

GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to present to you my First Annual Report on the Health of the Borough for the year 1937. I only commenced my duties as Medical Officer of Health for the Area on the 1st November, the post having been vacated in August by Dr. James D. Mackay, who had been Medical Officer since July, 1936. After his resignation, Dr. P. Morton acted as temporary Medical Officer of Health from August to the 31st October.

I should like to take this opportunity of thanking Mr. Prescott for the very great assistance he has given me, and I hope that in the near future you will grant him Clerical Assistance to help him in the many duties he has to perform.

I should also like to express my appreciation to the Officers and Staffs of the Council for their collaboration, and to the members of the Council for their courtesy.

I am,

Yours Obediently,

ADAM ARMIT,

Medical Officer of Health.

SECTION A.

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA

Area (in Acres)	...	...	...	...	1,237
Registrar-General's Estimate of resident population, mid-year, 1937	...	...	...	...	2,657
Number of Persons per Acre	...	...	...	...	2.1
Number of Inhabited Houses	...	...	...	...	894
Rateable Value	...	...	...	...	£24,493
Sum represented by a Penny Rate	...	...	...	...	£95

PHYSICAL FEATURE.

Surrounding hills shelter the town from all winds blowing towards the sea. The streets are narrow, with steep gradients. There is a small harbour, an esplanade, a beach partially of shingle, with good stretches of sand, and the small river Lym enters the sea at the Eastern extremity of the promenade.

INDUSTRIES

The town is a holiday resort.

UNEMPLOYMENT

The following approximate figures were kindly supplied by the Branch Employment Office, Axminster.

	Men.	Women & Juveniles	
	Wholly Unemployed.	Wholly Unemployed.	Total.
3/1/38	59	28	87
4/1/37	38	23	61

VITAL STATISTICS

			Total	M.	F.	
Live Births	Legitimate	...	46	22	24	Birth Rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population 17.7
	Illegitimate	...	1	1	—	
	Total	...	47	23	24	
Still Births—	Total	...	2			Rate per 1,000 Total (live and still) Births 40.8
	Legitimate	...		2		
	Illegitimate	...		0		
Deaths...	...	...	40	23	17	Crude Death Rate—15.05
						Comparative Death Rate—10.54
						Comparability Factor—0.70
Deaths from Puerperal causes					0	
Deaths of Infants under 1 year of age...					M. F.	
Legitimate					0 0	
Illegitimate					0 0	
Infantile Death Rate—Nil per 1,000 live births.						

Causes			Males	Females	
1	Typhoid and Paratyphoid	...	—	—	
2	Measles	... ..	—	—
3	Scarlet Fever	... ..	—	—
4	Whooping Cough	... ..	—	—
5	Diphtheria	... ..	—	—
6	Influenza	... ..	1	—	
7	Encephalitis Lethargica	...	—	—	
8	Cerebro-spinal Fever	... ..	—	—
9	Tuberculosis of Respiratory System		1	—	
10	Other Tuberculosis	... ..	—	1	
11	Syphilis	... ..	—	—
12	G.P.I. Tabes	... ..	—	—
13	Cancer	... ..	4	3	
14	Diabetes	... ..	—	2	
15	Cerebral Haemorrhage	... ..	1	1	
16	Heart Disease	... ..	3	2	
17	Aneurysm	... ..	—	—
18	Other Circulatory Diseases	...	1	1	
19	Bronchitis	... ..	3	3	
20	Pneumonia (all forms)	... ..	1	—	
21	Other Respiratory Diseases	...	1	—	
22	Peptic Ulcer	.. ..	—	—
23	Diarrhoea (under 2 years)	...	—	—	
24	Appendicitis	... ..	—	—
25	Cirrhosis of the Liver	... ..	—	—
26	Other Liver Diseases	... ..	—	—
27	Other Digestive Diseases	...	2	—	
28	Acute and Chronic Nephritis	...	1	—	
29	Puerperal Sepsis	... ..	—	—
30	Other Puerperal Diseases	...	—	—	
31	Con. Debility. Prematurity	...	—	—	
32	Senility	... ..	—	2	
33	Suicide	... ..	—	1	
34	Other Violence	... ..	—	—
35	Other Defined Diseases	...	3	1	
36	Ill Defined or Unknown	...	1	—	
37	Diarrhoea over 2 years ..	...	—	—
Total			23	17	40

COMPARATIVE VITAL STATISTICS

	Lyme Regis	England and Wales
Birth Rate	17.7	14.9
Death Rate	10.5	12.4
Infantile Death Rate ...	Nil	58
Maternal Mortality Rate ...	Nil	3.23
Deaths from Diarrhoea and Enteritis under 2 years of age	Nil	5.8
Heart Disease ...	Was the cause of 12% Total Deaths	
Cancer ...	,,	18% ,,
Senility ...	,,	5% ,,
Tuberculosis ...	,,	5% ,,
Bronchitis ...	,,	15% ,,

SECTION B.

LABORATORY FACILITIES.

Bacteriological work and analysis of water are carried out at the Southern Counties Laboratory, Bournemouth.

AMBULANCE FACILITIES.

Infectious cases are removed to hospital by the ambulance stationed at the hospital. There is no ambulance in the Borough for the removal of non-infectious and accident cases.

NURSING IN THE HOME.

One Queen's nurse is engaged by the District Nursing Association. 301 patients, including 42 children, were nursed during the year.

MIDWIVES

Three State Certified Midwives were registered to practice.

TREATMENT CENTRES AND CLINICS.

Maternity and Child Welfare (under the Dorset County Council).

Clinic held at Woodmead Hall once monthly.

GENERAL MEDICAL AND GENERAL SURGICAL.

Lyme Regis Hospital has 24 beds divided as follows :—

1 Womens' Ward containing 8 beds ; 1 Men's Ward 5 beds ; Childrens' Ward containing 4 beds and 3 cots ; 4 Private Wards containing 1 single bed each.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

There is an Isolation Hospital in Bridport administered by a Joint Hospital Board, made up of representatives from Bridport Borough, Bridport Rural District, Lyme Regis Borough, and Beaminster Rural District. This Hospital has only floor space for 12 beds. 18 beds are required under the County Hospital Scheme. Additional accommodation will have to be found for 6 beds to comply with the requirement of the County Scheme.

SMALLPOX.

No provision for the hospital treatment of this disease has been made.

SECTION C.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

WATER

The whole district has a piped supply, the lower levels being supplied by the Corporation, and the higher levels by the District Water Company. During the year the station supply was cut out of circulation because of contamination. This represented about 20,000 gallons daily. There is no regular sampling of the water but frequent samples are taken for bacteriological analysis. There is no co-operation between the Corporation and the Water Company for exchange of information regarding water analysis. The Corporation supply is chlorinated at Rhode Barton. The Council are investing additional sources of supply. The Council are under contract to take 50,000 gallons per day from the District Water Company, and have a temporary arrangement to take in excess of this amount. An additional break pressure supply has been coupled between the Company's supply and the Corporation supply (Rhode Barton) adjacent to the railway station to augment the town supply generally. There were 12 samples taken for analysis during the year.

DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE.

The district has a comprehensive new sewerage and drainage scheme completed at the end of 1936, and during the year many connections have been taken up and piped in lieu of the old stone drains, a considerable number of water surface connections have been made and storm overflows improved.

PUBLIC CLEANSING.

1,000 bins are collected twice weekly. The refuse is taken by motor wagons to a dump on the cliffs a mile to the East of the town. This dump is constantly on fire and smoke and fumes are blown usually to the East and North East, where fortunately there are no houses.

WATER ANALYSIS

CHEMICAL. Company's Water.

Reaction pH.	...	...	Neutral 7.2
Free Carbonic Acid	...	...	2.2
Total Solids	...	...	34.5
Chlorine in Chlorides	...	...	3.0
Hardness : Permanent	...	...	5.0
Temporary	...	...	19.5
Total	...	...	24.5
Carbonates as CO ₃	...	...	12.9
Metals : Iron	...	...	Absent
Zinc	...	...	Absent
Lead	...	...	Absent
Copper	...	...	Absent

BACTERIOLOGICAL Rhode Barton Supply

Total Organisms Count : Incubated 24 hours at 37°C—under 10 per c.c.

„ „ „ „ 3 days at 20°C—10 per c.c.

B Coli Count not present in 100 c.c.

The following samples and specimens were submitted for bacteriological analysis : Milk, 19. Water, 11. Salads, 2. Cream, 5. Butter, 3. Ice Cream, 2. Faeces, 4. Urine, 2. Swabs (Diph), 112.

RIVERS AND STREAMS

There is no pollution of the river by sewage effluent from the area.

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA

No. of Inspections	...	325		
No. of Informal Notices	...	20	No. complied with	... 20
No. of Statutory Notices	...	—	No. complied with	... —

SHOPS

No action was found necessary regarding these.

SMOKE ABATEMENT

Several observations were taken.

SWIMMING BATHS AND POOLS

There are none. The beach is very safe for bathing, and the Council have placed 2 safety rafts, and erected numerous bathing huts.

ERADICATION OF BED BUGS

Action was taken in 3 houses—Formaldehyde was used.

SCHOOLS

The Sanitary conditions are fair.

SECTION D.

HOUSING

There is a considerable amount of bad property in the town, and I am not at all satisfied with the housing conditions under which many of the people are living, and I intend during 1938 making a detailed survey of the area in an attempt to have this state of affairs remedied. Unfortunately, your Sanitary Inspector, who is also Borough Surveyor, and who has many other duties tacked on to him, has no clerical assistance. Therefore, it is absolutely impossible for him to carry out efficiently all the duties assigned to him. I hope the Council will in the near future furnish the necessary staff.

1. Inspection of Dwelling-houses during the Year.

1.	a.	Total No. of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts) ...	101
	b.	No. of Inspections made for the purpose ...	101
2.	a.	No. of Dwelling-houses (included under sub head (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925 ...	21
	b.	No of Inspections made for the purpose ...	24
3.		No. of Dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation ...	10
4.		No. of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation ...	12

2. Remedy of Defects during the Year without Service of Formal Notices.

No. of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers	9
--	-----	-----	-----	---

3. Action under Statutory Powers during the Year.

a.	Proceedings under sections 9, 10 and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936.			
	1.	No. of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs ...	...	2
	2.	No. of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices :—		
		a. By Owners ...	...	2
		b. By Local Authority in default of owners ...		0

b.	Proceedings under Public Health Acts.		
1.	No. of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied	...	0
2.	No. of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices :—		
a.	By Owners	... ..	0
b.	By Local Authority in default of owners	...	0
c.	Proceedings under sections 11 and 13 of the Housing Act, 1936.		
1.	No. of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made	... ..	0
2.	No. of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders	... ..	0
d.	Proceedings under section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936.		
1.	No. of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made	...	0
2.	No. of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenement or room having been rendered fit	...	0

4. Housing Act, 1936—Part IV—Overcrowding.

a.	1.	No. of dwellings overcrowded at the end of the year	...	6
	2.	No. of families dwelling therein	... ..	6
	3.	No. of persons dwelling therein	... ..	39
b.		No. of new cases of overcrowding reported during the year	... ..	1
c.	1.	No. of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year		2
	2.	No. of persons concerned in such cases	... ..	11
d.		Particulars of any cases in which dwelling-houses have again become overcrowded after the Local Authority have taken steps for the abatement of overcrowding		0
5.		Total No. of new houses erected during 1937	...	40
		No. erected during 1937 with State Assistance.	...	
	1.	By Local Authority	... ..	28
	2.	By other Bodies or Persons	... ..	12
		No. of houses owned by Local Authority	...	130
		Approximate No. of working class houses in District	...	370

SECTION E.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD

COWSHEDS AND DAIRIES.

No. of Persons on Register at end of 1937...	...	...	21
No. of Dairy Farms and other dairy premises on Register at end of 1937	...	...	21
No. of Dairy Farms inspected during 1937	...	...	7
No. of Inspections during 1937...	...	...	21
No. of Notices served—33. No. complied with	...	...	33
No. of Milkshops inspected during 1937	...	...	7
No. of Inspections	...	...	14
No. of Notices served	...	...	Nil
No. complied with	...	...	Nil

Two T.T. milk, and one Accredited milk licences were issued. There is no pasteurising plant in the Borough.

MEAT AND OTHER FOODS

The 2 slaughter houses together with shops, stalls, and vehicles, where food is prepared are regularly inspected.

CARCASES INSPECTED AND CONDEMNED

	Cattle excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs
No. killed (if known) ...	41	—	54	200	158
No. Inspected ...	41	—	54	200	158
All Diseases except Tuberculosis	—	—	—	—	—
Whole carcasses condemned ...	—	—	—	—	—
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned ...	—	—	—	—	—
Percentage of the No. inspected affected with disease other than Tuberculosis ...	—	—	—	—	—
Tuberculosis only					
Whole carcasses condemned ...	1	—	—	—	—
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned ...	—	—	—	—	—
Percentage of the No. inspected affected with Tuberculosis ...	2½%	—	—	—	—

FOOD AND DRUGS

11 samples were taken for analysis by the County Council. All were found to be genuine. Chocolate Roll, 1. Fish Paste, 1. Flour, 1. Milk, 6. Pork Pie, 1. Sausages, 1.

NUTRITION

No steps have been taken to increase the knowledge of the public on this subject. No Milk is being supplied to any of the Elementary Schools in the Borough. This is unfortunate, the reason given being that no designated supplier will take on the job. Surely this difficulty can be overcome.

SHELLFISH

There are no shellfish beds or layings in the district.

SECTION F.

PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER, INFECTIOUS DISEASE

The Borough was fortunate in that it had no epidemic of infectious disease during the year. No action has been taken to provide artificial immunisation against Diphtheria, nor for the use of Measles Serum for Prophylaxis and Attenuation. As regards hospital treatment, no provision is being made for complicated cases of Measles and Whooping Cough. These require very skilled nursing, which the majority of homes cannot offer. The Council pay for Diphtheria Anti-toxin used by the medical practitioners. No provision has been made for the accommodation and treatment of Small Pox patients.

PREVENTION OF BLINDNESS

No cases of Ophthalmia Neonatorum were notified.

TUBERCULOSIS

Three new cases were notified during the year. 1 Pulmonary, and 2 Non-Pulmonary. 2 deaths occurred, 1 Pulmonary, and 1 Non-Pulmonary. No action was taken under the Public Health Regulations, 1925.

NEW CASES AND MORTALITY DURING 1937

Age	NEW CASES				DEATHS			
	Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary		Pulmonary		No-Pulmonary	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0—1
1—5
5—10
10—15
15—20	1	...	...	...	...
20—25
25—35	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	1
35—45
45—55	1	...	...	...
55—65
65 and over
	— 1		— 2		1 —		— 1	

NOTIFICATIONS OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

<u>DISEASE</u>	Total cases all ages	Under 1	1-2	2-3	3-4	4-5	5-10	10-15	15-20	20-35	35-45	45-65	65 & over	Total cases removed to Hospital	Total Deaths in Hospital	Total Deaths
Smallpox ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
Diphtheria ...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...
Erysipelas ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Scarlet Fever ...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...
Enteric Fever ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Puerperal Pyrexia ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Puerperal Fever ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Cerebro-Spinal Fever ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Acute Poliomyelitis ...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...
Ophthalmia Neonatorum ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Malaria ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Trench Fever ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Dysentry ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Encephalitis Lethargica...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Pneumonia ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Pulmonary Tuberculosis	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1
Non-Pulm. Tuberculosis	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	1
TOTALS ...	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	4	-	-	-	3	-	2

FACTORIES, WORKSHOPS AND WORKPLACES

INSPECTION

	Premises		Inspections	Written Notices	Number of Occupiers Prosecuted
Factories	(Including	Factory			
	Laundries)	...	2	—	—
Workshops	(Including	Work-			
	shop Laundries)	...	1	—	—
Workplaces	(Other than	Out-			
	workers' Premises)	...	49	—	—
Total			52	—	—

No defects were found.

PORT HEALTH AUTHORITY

The following shipping used the Port during the year :

Coastwise Cargo Boats	...	...	21
Foreign Cargo Boats	...	...	10
Passenger Steamers	...	...	10

There were no cases of Illness to be dealt with, and no defects reported.

Principal Imports are timber and cement. The water supply for the use of the ships is at too great a distance from the moorings. This is being remedied by the Authority during 1938.



